CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A dish rack for an automated dishwasher, comprising:

a metal frame configured to support dishes, and

an exterior coating covering at least a portion of the metal frame and comprising:

an electrocoated layer on the metal frame, and

a polymer layer on the electrocoated layer;

whereby the exterior coating protects the metal frame from corrosion while providing an aesthetic appearance.

2. The dish rack according to claim 1 wherein the electrocoated layer is non-metallic.

3. The dish rack according to claim 1 wherein the electrocoated layer is a paint layer.

4. The dish rack according to claim 3 wherein the paint layer is non-metallic.

5. The dish rack according to claim 1 wherein the polymer layer is a thermoplastic.

6. The dish rack according to claim 5 wherein the thermoplastic is a non-hydrocarbon carbon-chain polymer.

7. The dish rack according to claim 6 wherein the non-hydrocarbon carbon chain polymer is a polyvinyl chloride.

8. The dish rack according to claim 5 wherein the thermoplastic is a polyvinyl chloride blend.

9. The dish rack according to claim 1 wherein the metal frame comprises a wire-form having multiple interconnected wires.

10. The dish rack according to claim 9 wherein the wire form defines a bottom wall and a peripheral wall extending upwardly from the bottom wall to form an open-top, dish-holding recess.

11. The dish rack according to claim 10 and the wire form further comprising at least one set of tines located within the dish-holding recess.

12. The dish rack according to claim 1 wherein the entire metal frame is covered by the exterior coating.

13. The dish rack according to claim 1 wherein the exterior coating further comprises a primer layer between the electrocoated layer and the polymer layer.

14. The dish rack according to claim 13 wherein the primer layer comprises a water-based primer.

15. The dish rack according to claim 13 wherein the primer layer comprises a non-water-based primer.

16. The dish rack according to claim 15 wherein the primer layer comprises an acetone-based primer.

17. The dish rack according to claim 15 wherein the primer layer comprises a methyl ethyl ketone-based primer.

18. The dish rack according to claim 13 wherein the electrocoated layer is non-metallic.

19. The dish rack according to claim 13 wherein the electrocoated layer is a paint layer.

20. The dish rack according to claim 19 wherein the paint layer is non-metallic.

21. The dish rack according to claim 19 wherein the polymer layer is a thermoplastic.

22. The dish rack according to claim 21 wherein the thermoplastic is a non-hydrocarbon carbon -chain polymer.

23. The dish rack according to claim 22 wherein the non-hydrocarbon carbon chain polymer is a polyvinyl chloride.

24. The dish rack according to claim 21 wherein the thermoplastic is a polyvinyl chloride blend.

25. The dish rack according to claim 21 and further comprising a corrosion-resistant layer between the electrocoated layer and the metal frame.

26. The dish rack according to claim 25 wherein the corrosion-resistant layer comprises an iron phosphate layer.

27. The dish rack according to claim 25 wherein the corrosion-resistant layer comprises a zinc phosphate layer.

28. The dish rack according to claim 25 wherein the corrosion-resistant layer comprises a tri-chrome sealer layer.

29. An automated dishwasher, comprising:

a wash tub having top, bottom, side, and rear walls, which collectively form an open-faced wash chamber;

a door hingedly mounted relative to the wash tub for movement between an open and closed conditions to selectively close the open-faced wash chamber;

a dish rack located within the open-faced wash chamber and comprising a metal frame configured to support dishes; and

an exterior coating covering at least a portion of the metal frame and comprising:

an electrocoated layer on the metal frame, and

a polymer layer on the electrocoated layer;

whereby the exterior coating protects the metal frame from corrosion while providing an aesthetic appearance.

30. The automated dishwasher according to claim 29 wherein the exterior coating further comprises a primer layer between the electrocoated layer and the polymer layer.

31. The automated dishwasher according to claim 30 wherein the primer layer comprises a water-based primer.

32. The automated dishwasher according to claim 30 wherein the primer layer comprises a non-water-based primer.

33. The automated dishwasher according to claim 32 wherein the primer layer comprises an acetone-based primer.

34. The automated dishwasher according to claim 32 wherein the primer layer comprises a methyl ethyl ketone-based primer.

35. The automated dishwasher according to claim 30 wherein the electrocoated layer is non-metallic.

36. The automated dishwasher according to claim 30 wherein the electrocoated layer is a paint layer.

37. The automated dishwasher according to claim 36 wherein the paint layer is non-metallic.

38. The automated dishwasher according to claim 30 wherein the polymer layer is a thermoplastic.

39. The automated dishwasher according to claim 38 wherein the thermoplastic is a non-hydrocarbon carbon-chain polymer.

40. The automated dishwasher according to claim 39 wherein the non-hydrocarbon carbon chain polymer is a polyvinyl chloride.

41. The automated dishwasher according to claim 38 wherein the thermoplastic is a polyvinyl chloride blend.

42. The automated dishwasher according to claim 38 and further comprising a corrosion-resistant layer between the electrocoated layer and the metal frame.

43. The automated dishwasher according to claim 42 wherein the corrosion-resistant layer comprises an iron phosphate layer.

44. The automated dishwasher according to claim 42 wherein the corrosion-resistant layer comprises a zinc phosphate layer.

45. The automated dishwasher according to claim 42 wherein the corrosion-resistant layer comprises a tri-chrome sealer layer.